

**Response from Rep. Gael Tarleton on Regence chiropractic care
10/25/13**

Thank you for expressing your concerns about Regence's new policy regarding prior authorization for chiropractic care. I've heard from many constituents about this issue, and I really appreciate that you all took the time to pass along your concerns.

It is absolutely imperative that we preserve patient choice, and I would not support any policy threatening that right. I've received additional information from the Insurance Commissioner's office, as well as Regence lobbyists, and I want to make sure you are aware of these clarifications.

This new policy about prior authorization will go into effect along with a new system, where Regence will designate three tiers of providers (including both chiropractors and physical therapists) based on their prior utilization data. Over time, providers will have the opportunity to move into a higher tier if their performance improves. Here are the different policies for these tiers:

- Providers in Tier 1 must notify Regence of the first visit from a patient, but the visit and the plan will not be subject to prior authorization.
- Providers in Tier 2 must also notify Regence of the first visit from a patient and the first six visits will not be subject to prior authorization. After the sixth visit, however, they must let Regence know the future treatment plan for the patient.
- Providers in Tier 3 must receive prior authorization for the course of treatment.

No claims will be denied due to lack of prior authorization until February 1, 2014, which will give Regence some time to talk with you further about this issue and to ensure this is a smooth transition. I know that it will be hosting some training sessions for providers, and if you're interested in that, or if your provider is, I would love to send over the information.

Also, regarding the Insurance Commissioner's approval of this new policy, the office has expressed it does not violate the law since it would only apply to certain chiropractic procedures and would not unreasonably exclude entire categories of providers. But if you are having problems getting your chiropractic claims paid, I know the office is taking these complaints on a case-by-case basis and I encourage you to report it here [<http://www.insurance.wa.gov/complaints-and-fraud/file-a-complaint/>]

We will continue monitoring this policy as Regence makes the transition, and we will do everything we can to ensure that patient choice is protected.

Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions, and once again, thank you for your e-mail!